



SB 442

Lazlovich  
JUDICIARY

22  
DATE 2/19/09  
BILL NO SB 442

## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS BUREAU

February 18, 2009

To whom it may concern,

I have been a member of the Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office for the last 16 years. For over the past 8 years, I have held the rank of Investigator and been assigned to the Criminal Investigations Bureau. My specialty is investigating crimes against people, the majority of these crimes being perpetrated against juveniles. I am a member of a multidisciplinary team that specializes in investigating physical and sexual abuse of children. In the last three years I have seen a significant and alarming increase in what is commonly referred to as "shaken baby" cases.

The most frustrating aspect of these investigations is that they need never happen in the first place. This is a crime that can be completely prevented. Unfortunately, the tiny victims of these crimes are completely powerless to stop their abusers, and cannot speak up on their own behalf.

It is because of this that I am strongly supporting Senate Bill (SB) 442, a program to educate parents about the dangers of shaking children. I currently carry two open investigations involving infants who were shaken and sustained injuries. One child may be able to lead a normal life, but only time will tell. The other child, however, will forever be affected by her abuse. She faces a lifetime of physical therapy and medical attention so she can live a *somewhat* normal lifestyle. I will be reminded of these two cases long after I leave this career, because I could do nothing to better either child's situation.

In a time when money is very tight and everyone is forced to cut back and compete for meager government funds. I strongly urge you to pass this bill and fund this program. The funding for this program is minimal compared to the amount of money that needs to be spent on after care of these victims for the rest of their lives. There were eight such reported cases in just Lewis and Clark County in the past several years. It has been my experience that these types of crimes are related to the parent's economic status, educational background, and social experiences. A publicly funded program such as this will be much cheaper in the long run than paying the associated medical bills of the victim after the fact (not to mention the expenses associated with trials and incarceration of the perpetrators). Ideally, this program will prevent many of these types of crimes from happening at all.

I urge you to please take this bill serious and do the right thing for the youth of Montana in passing this bill. I know I speak for all my law enforcement colleagues when I say we hope for a day when this senseless and completely preventable crime no longer occurs. My thanks to Mr. Laslovich and the many Montana professionals who are dedicating their time and energy for this worthy cause.

Respectfully,

Cory Olson  
Criminal Investigator  
Lewis & Clark County Sheriff's Office  
Criminal Investigations Bureau